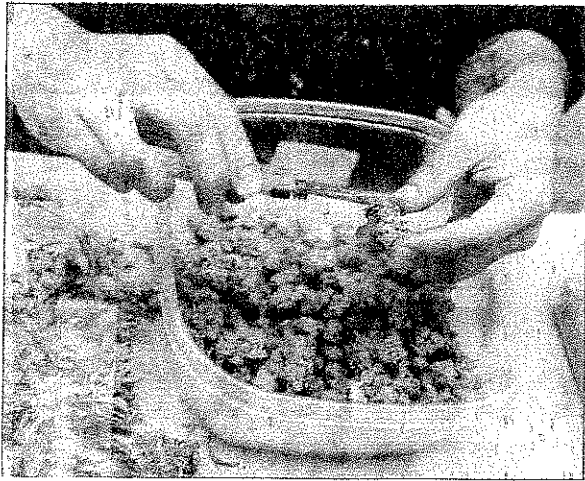


MEDICAL MARIJUANA



STAFF FILE PHOTO

Supervisor Michael Antonovich recommends the county study the impacts of medical pot cultivation, manufacture, testing and distribution in unincorporated areas.

Supes to crack down on pot shops

By Elizabeth Marcellino
City News Service

County supervisors Tuesday signaled their intent to crack down on illegal marijuana dispensaries and at least temporarily ban growing cannabis in unincorporated areas, but turned back a proposed ban on mobile sales and delivery.

Supervisor Michael Antonovich recommended that the county study the impacts of medical marijuana cultivation, manufacture, testing and distribution in the unincorporated areas in light of recent passage of state legislation setting up a regulatory framework.

The county has banned medical marijuana dispensaries in unincorporated areas since 2011, using its zoning laws to enforce the prohibition.

Until now, there has been no ban on related activities. But the board today unanimously directed county lawyers to draft an ordinance that would prohibit all cultivation, manufacturing, laboratory testing and distribution in unincorporated areas of the

county for at least 45 days, while the study is underway.

Antonovich warned of dangers associated with growing cannabis, saying in his motion that it "increases the risk of trespassing and burglary and acts of violence."

One man told the board that growing marijuana plants in his backyard was the only way he could provide relief to his dying father, diagnosed with inoperable brain cancer.

"Ban or no ban, I would have done everything in my power to bring my father the relief that he needed," the man said.

Antonovich also proposed a prohibition on mobile sales and commercial delivery of medical marijuana.

Supervisor Sheila Kuehl said she was concerned about "those who do have a prescription and can't leave their homes."

Ultimately, the ban on mobile sales failed to garner enough support and Antonovich withdrew that part of his proposal.

Supervisor Don Knabe took the opportunity to call for a crackdown on illegal dispensaries.

L.A. COUNTY

WED 2-3-16 Daily Breeze Oversight for Probation Department studied

By Sarah Favot

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Los Angeles County will explore forming an oversight commission for its Probation Department, which would be the first of its kind in the state, officials said.

The Board of Supervisors on Tuesday unanimously approved a motion by Supervisors Sheila Kuehl and Mark Ridley-Thomas to form a working group that will examine existing entities that oversee some aspect of the Probation Department and will make a recommendation whether a comprehensive oversight commission is needed, similar to the one recently formed for the Sheriff's Department.

"This is a time for increased transparency, accountability and efficacy with respect to the department of probation," Ridley-

Thomas said.

He said there have been eight audits of the department in 18 months. The audits, he said, "made it abundantly clear to me that we have systemic issues to address."

The Probation Department supervises juvenile offenders, who are in and out of custody, and adult probationers.

The department has been fraught with scandal regarding its juvenile facilities. Last spring, the department came out of six years of federal monitoring by the U.S. Department of Justice in response to reports of abuse and poor conditions in juvenile camps.

The move toward establishing a probation oversight commission follows a pattern of reforms made by the supervisors in recent months — including establishing civilian oversight of the Sheriff's De-

partment, hiring a child protection czar and creating an Office of Diversion and Reentry for inmates who have a mental illness.

The Board of Supervisors is also looking to hire a permanent chief probation officer. Former Chief Jerry Powers resigned last year amid a cloud of allegations that he had an inappropriate relationship with his hand-picked administrative deputy.

Interim Chief Probation Officer Cal Remington said he supported the motion.

"The Probation Department is making a commitment to this board and to the public that we will become more transparent," Remington said. "This is one way to do that."

He said no other probation department in the state has a comprehensive oversight commission.

Advocates called for the working group to include community input.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Deputies convicted of jail beating cover-up

By The Associated Press

Two sheriff's deputies have been convicted of trying to cover up the beating of a handcuffed inmate at the Los Angeles County jail.

City News Service says that on Tuesday, a federal jury convicted Joey Aguiar and Mariano Ramirez of falsifying reports. But the

panel acquitted them of conspiracy to violate civil rights and deadlocked on another charge.

The deputies could now face up to 20 years in prison.

Prosecutors said that in 2009 the deputies choked, struck, kicked and pepper-sprayed handcuffed inmate Bret Phillips and then wrote reports indicating he

attacked them.

Defense lawyers argued the deputies used legal force after Phillips became combative and threatening.

The deputies were among 21 current or former sheriff's employees charged in connection with a probe of corruption and abuse in the Sheriff's Department.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Supes to discuss probation oversight

By Sarah Favot

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Inspired by the newly formed Sheriff's Department oversight commission, Supervisor Sheila Kuehl will ask her fellow supervisors today to consider exploring a similar oversight body for the Probation Department.

Kuehl, with Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas' backing, will ask that the Board of Supervisors establish a working group that will evaluate the existing groups tasked with some kind of monitoring of the Probation Department. The working group will recommend whether an oversight commission is needed.

The board convened a similar working group to make recommendations on the Sheriff's Department oversight commission.

"Over the last year, especially as we were putting together the sheriff oversight commission, it seemed to be that there needed to be some kind of unified and empowered oversight commission in probation as well," Kuehl said.

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Probation

FROM PAGE 3

Eleven groups oversee or monitor some aspect of the Probation Department, according to Kuehl.

The Probation Department is tasked with the supervision and custody of juvenile offenders, who are housed in 13 juvenile camps and three juvenile halls throughout the county, and the supervision of adult probationers, whose population has been growing in response to the shift of nonviolent, nonsexual and nonserious offenders from state prisons to county jurisdiction under Assembly Bill 109 in 2011.

The working group will also make a recommendation whether oversight should be separate for the adult and juvenile populations.

The discussion comes as the county is searching for a new chief probation officer.

Former Chief Jerry Powers resigned late last year under a cloud of allegations that he had an inappropriate relationship with a subordinate that he hired as his administrative deputy.

The department has been headed by five leaders over the past 10 years.

The Probation Department has been fraught with scandal regarding its juvenile facilities. Last spring, the department came out of six

years of federal monitoring by the U.S. Department of Justice in response to reports of abuse and poor conditions in the camps.

Kuehl said the responsibilities of ensuring the DOJ reforms are continued are "scattered."

The Board of Supervisors has taken a reform approach to many aspects of its duties, including the creation of the Office of Diversion and Reentry for mentally ill inmates and the establishment of an Office of Child Protection.

"I think that we have shown over the past little over a year that we're really devoted as a group, the five of us, to the kind of reform that invests in people, in the people who work for us and the people we serve and, frankly, the people we lock up," Kuehl said. "We want there to be more of a chance."

A Probation Department oversight commission would not have the challenges associated with the Sheriff's Department oversight commission, because the sheriff is elected and therefore has autonomy over the department, while the chief probation officer reports directly to the Board of Supervisors.

"We're hoping that by engaging a strong, unified commission, we could get directly at any systemic problems in the Probation Department," Kuehl said.